

Message Text

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71

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15

AID-20 CCO-00 FBO-01 NIC-01 M-03 OC-06 OPR-02 SCA-01

A-01 OMB-01 SY-10 INRE-00 USIE-00 SCS-03 SSO-00

NSCE-00 RSR-01 /142 W

----- 100365

O 032220 Z MAY 73

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 1949

DIA WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ATHENS NIACT IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL DHAHRAN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

USCINCEUR NIACT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE

USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE 2308

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 5068

ATHENS FOR AMB BUFFUM

DEPT PASS USINT CAIRO

E. O. 11652: XGDS

TAGS: PINS, LE

SUBJ: INTERNAL SECURITY - SITREP 6

1. LEBANESE ARMY (KANAAN) INFORMED US AT 2130 Z THAT
FIGHTING IN LOWER BEKAA- ARKUB REGION BETWEEN ARMY AND
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FEDAYEEN HAS DIMINISHED CONSIDERABLY. NO ADDITIONAL CROSSINGS FROM SYRIA REPORTED ALTHOUGH FEDAYEEN WHO CROSSED EARLIER

(ABOUT 1630 Z) STILL IN PLACE AND BELIEVED NUMBER PERHAPS UP TO 1,000. (NOTE: PRESS HAS FIGURE 4,000). THREAT OF HEAVY FIGHTING REMAINS, ESPECIALLY SINCE LEBANESE ARMY DOES NOT HAVE MUCH STRENGTH IN THAT AREA ALTHOUGH GOL (DIB OF PRESIDENCY) IS LESS OPTIMISTIC THAN BEFORE. FURTHER DANGER IS THAT, SHOULD SYRIA AND FEDAYEEN LEADERSHIP ADOPT CLEARLY HOSTILE ATTITUDE, TROUBLE WOULD BREAK OUT IN SOUTH AND NORTH WHICH HAVE THUS FAR REMAINED CALM. THERE ARE NO RPT NO INDICATIONS THIS WILL OCCUR BUT AT THIS TIME NO ONE CAN PREDICT. SITUATION IN BEIRUT CAMPS REPORTED CALM ALTHOUGH THERE HAS BEEN SOME CROWD MOVEMENT REPORTED IN MOSLEM AREAS (WITH NO VIOLENCE).

2. BOTH FOREIGN MINISTER AND TONY FRANGIE HAVE BEEN ACTIVELY WORKING ON SYRIAN GOVERNMENT BUT BOTH REPORT RESULTS DISCOURAGING. SYRIANS EVEN DENY THAT ANY FEDAYEEN HAVE CROSSED INTO LEBANON. ABOU HAMAD FEELS EGYPTIAN ATTITUDE, ON OTHER HAND STILL FAVORABLE. SADAT HAS SPOKEN BY PHONE TO FRANGIE AND PROMISED TO WEIGH IN WITH HAFEZ ASSAD OF SYRIA. ABOU HAMAD FEARS SYRIAN INFLUENCE ON ARAFAT'S POSITION RE AGREEMENT WITH GOL.

3. PRIME MINISTER ANNOUNCED AFTER MIDNIGHT LOCAL TIME MAY 4 THAT HE HAD SUBMITTED HIS RESIGNATION BUT THAT HE HAD NOT BEEN ABLE SUBMIT IT TO FRANGIE WHO WAS ALREADY ASLEEP (COMMENT: BIT OF LEBANESE FLIM- FLAM). AT SAME TIME, THERE HAVE BEEN SOME ENCOURAGING DEVELOPMENTS AND IF THEY CONTINUED IT POSSIBLE HE WILL RECONSIDER POSITION LATER MAY 4. WE ARE TOLD THAT MAJOR FAVORABLE DEVELOPMENT WAS SADAT CONVERSATION WITH FRANGIE. HOWEVER, TONY FRANGIE AND FONMIN ABOU HAMAD SAY THAT ODDS FAVOR HAFEZ' S RESIGNATION WITH MILITARY GOVT BEING DESIGNATED BY FRANGIE. EFFORTS STILL ALIVE AT REACHING NEW AGREEMENT WITH FEDAYEEN AND SHOULD THIS TAKE PLACE HAFEZ COULD RECONSIDER. CONSIDERABLE POLITICAL MANEUVERING OBVIOUSLY GOING ON AND SITUATION FUZZY. HOWEVER, EVEN SHOULD ARAFAT REACH NEW AGREEMENT WITH GOL, HIS ABILITY SUSTAIN IT OPEN TO DOUBT. HE UNABLE SUSTAIN CEASEFIRE STEMMING FROM MAY 2 AGREEMENT AND CASUALTIES ON MAY 3 WERE HEAVY, INCLUDING LEBANESE
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CIVILIANS KILLED BY INDISCRIMINATE FEDAYEEN SHOOTING AND ROCKET- FIRING WHICH HAS ANGERED FRANGIE AND ARMY.

4. IT IS NOW 1:15 AM. WE ARE RETIRING TO TAKE A FRESH READING IN MORNING.
HOUGHTON

NOTE BY OC/ T: NOT PASSED CAIRO.

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NMAFVVZCZ

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*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

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